



December 2006 Newsletter

News You Can Use...

Coto Selected As Chair of the 26 Member California Latino Legislative Caucus

Assemblymember Joe Coto was selected as the Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus. The Caucus met last weekend to welcome new members, elect officers and discuss legislative priorities.

The 26 member caucus is one of the most influential within the legislature. Its members hold strategic leadership positions in both the Assembly and the Senate. The Caucus' focus is primarily on improving the quality of life for working families in California. With over 35 % of the population in California being Latino, the issues affecting them, affect all Californians. The key legislative priorities identified by the Latino Caucus are: Education, Health, Housing, Economic Development and Leadership.

Coto served as the Vice-Chair of the Caucus for the past 2 years. "As our population changes, it is critical for the Caucus to continue taking steps to ensure that more Latinos are graduating from college and are prepared to assume the jobs of the 21st century, that Latino families have access to quality health care and that they have the opportunity to own a home," said Coto.

5 Day's Left to Give to Toy's For Tots Program

The Office of Assemblymember Coto is participating in the 2006 United States Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. Every year the Marine Corp initiates a major campaign to collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December to distribute as holiday gifts to needy children in the community. **Toys can be dropped off at the District office at 100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 319, San José. Call 408.277.1220 for directions.**



Due to limited parking, we are happy to pick up toys at the passenger loading zone on 3rd street in front of the state building. Please call ahead to 408.277.1220 to request to be met downstairs.

Donations will be accepted through December 18th. Other drop off sites can be found at:
<http://www.toys4tots.us/dropoffsite.htm>

Please help make this holiday season bright for our children.

Assemblymember Coto Commends Comcast Employees



Last month, more than 150 Comcast employees, their families and City Year Corps members participated in the 6th Annual Comcast Cares Day at James Lick High School. These volunteers spent their day cleaning classrooms, repairing and enhancing the basketball court, painting and reinstalling



plywood fence bleachers, repainting the metal parts of the bleachers, weeding/mulching/planting rose gardens and running field games with the youth.

Assemblymember Coto joined San Jose Councilmember Nora Campos, East Side Union High School District Board member George Shirakawa, Vice President of Comcast Navarra Williams (South Bay Area) and Director of Government Relations for Comcast Eddie Garcia (South Bay) in congratulating the volunteers and expressing gratitude for their hard work on behalf of the East San Jose community.

Twenty Million Dollars Included in State Budget for English Learners Program

Assembly Bill 2117, authored by Assemblymember Coto and signed into law, establishes the English Learners Acquisition and Development Pilot Program. This three-year competitive grant pilot project seeks to identify existing best practices regarding curriculum, instruction and staff development for English language instruction for the purpose of replicating them in other schools throughout the state. Assemblymember Coto worked successfully to secure tremendous community support from groups such as the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), California Teachers Association (CTA) and Classified School Employees Association (CSEA). The California Department of Education is currently putting together the guidelines for the program. For more information on this program, contact Mike Welch at 916.319.2023.



Special Message From Assemblymember Coto: Give the Gift of Reading



I believe that one of the greatest gifts a parent can give his/her child is the love of reading. Learning to read is the single most important factor in determining a child's success in school and life.

Reading together is a great way to engage parents in supporting their child's education and to help them toward lifelong learning. Teachers and families in the 23rd Assembly District and all across California strive every day to break the cycle of under-education and poverty that prevents so many children from reaching their full potential.

There are several programs that have been developed in California to encourage the pursuit of literacy as a family activity. They are: California Even Start, the California Reading Excellence Act, the California State Plan for Adult Education, and the California Head Start Collaboration Office. There is a local program that I would like to recognize. It is the San Jose Public Library's "Books for Little Hands" program. This program has provided early literacy assistance to 8,648 children and their parents and 1,081 early childhood educators. They believe that spending time reading to children and engaging them through books enhances a child's skills and gives him/her a greater likelihood of entering kindergarten ready to succeed. Since 2000, this program has connected educators with students and their families. They provide not only books, but hands on support so that students can work with the books. Any parent whose child needs help reading should contact the library.

If you would like more information visit the Books for Little Hands website at www.sjlibrary.org/services/early_care/b4lh/early_literacy.htm.

The changes we make today will not change this generation alone. It will also impact generations to come. Please join me in supporting this worthy cause.

Enjoy Christmas In the Park - A San Jose Family Tradition



Take your family downtown to enjoy the festivities at Christmas in the Park. The exhibit is located on Plaza de Cesar Chavez (on Market St. between San Carlos and San Fernando Streets). There are 60 animated displays, 100's of decorated trees, and 1000's of twinkling lights. It is open everyday until January 1, 2007, from 9am to



midnight. There are nightly entertainment (until December 23rd) and activities for the children to enjoy. **All events are free to the public.**

Christmas in the Park is organized as a non-profit corporation known as Christmas in the Park, Inc. It is comprised of volunteer citizens who donate their time and energy to make the exhibit a reality year after year.

As a co-sponsor, the City of San José, Department of Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services, works closely with the Board of Directors in providing staff assistance. Board members and community volunteers have donated more than 257,000 hours and raise funds year-round to bring San Jose this well-loved holiday tradition.

For more information, call the Christmas in the Park hotline at 408.995.NOEL (6635) or go to <http://www.christmasinthepark.com>.

Coto Community Spotlight

This month our office would like to recognize Sandy Ngo, a senior at Mt. Pleasant High School and an active member of our community. Ms. Ngo was selected to participate in Vision New America's 2006 internship program and she completed an internship in the California State legislature. In addition to being an outstanding student, Sandy enjoys volunteering at the local Santa Clara Valley American Red Cross office and tutoring students who are struggling in school, through the Math English Enrichment Institute.



Sandy was recently chosen to sit on the City of San Jose Youth Commission as the representative from Council District 5. There she will have a direct impact on issues facing young people today and will act as the voice for youth in her neighborhood. Ms. Ngo is a rising star in our community and our office applauds her dedication and commitment to public service.

Drive Safe This Holiday Season

The holidays should be a joyous time, providing opportunities to enjoy the company of friends and family.

We want everyone to have a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Unfortunately, many celebrations include alcohol. Remember, every 33 minutes, someone dies in an alcohol-related crash. If you are going to drive, refrain from drinking. If you plan to drink, make sure that you have a designated driver, a place to stay for the night, or a taxi service you can call.



Let's do all we can to keep our community safe this holiday season.

Check the following websites for information on transportation on New Year's Eve

<http://www.sfmuni.com/cms/msc/announce/SFMuniNewYearsEve.htm>

<http://www.caltrain.com>

or call Golden Star Cab at 408.573.7777

Veterans Cab 1.800.281.4488

Coto Community Calendar of Events

December 1- January 1, 2007

Christmas in the Park, Cesar Chavez Park, Market St.

Stroll among 60 animated displays, 100's of decorated trees, and 1000's of twinkling lights. Free nightly entertainment

Contact 408.995.NOEL or www.christmasinthepark.com

December 1- January 15

Downtown Ice

Enjoy ice skating with your family in a one-of-a-kind circular rink under the stars. Located in the heart of downtown, it is within walking distance of our wonderful downtown attractions.

Contact 408.279.1775 or www.sjdowntown.com

December 14-24

Ballet San Jose presents **"The Nutcracker"**

A festive yearly tradition for 1000's of kids and families throughout San Jose. This will warm your heart like a cup of hot cocoa on a cold winter's night.

At: Center for the Performing Arts

Admission: \$25-\$78

Call 408.288.2800 or go to www.balletsanjose.org

December 15-17

"Nuestra Navidad"- "Pasko Na Naman"

Two premier ethnic dance companies, Aztlan Academy and Kaisahan, team together to present a festive holiday dance program, combining Mexican and Philippine musical rhythms.

At: Montgomery Theater

Admission: \$10-\$20

Contact 408.984.0342 or www.aztlanacademy.org

December 17, 2006

Lua Viet proudly presents the Winter Holiday Fundraising Event

"Cho Em Ngay Mai" (Giving Children a Better Tomorrow)

4:30pm at Kobe Restaurant, 2086 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA

The event will include a magical night of fine dining and entertainment

Singer: Khanh Ly, Musician: Vu Thanh An, Band: Phuong Hoang

Tickets: \$50 and VIP \$100

Since 1983, the flame of the Lua Viet organization has been carried on by countless people, growing into a network of friends across the United States and in countries such as France, Canada, and Australia. The simple purpose of Lua Viet is to create a medium through which friends can interact with each other in various activities including humanitarian efforts for the needy children of Vietnam.

All proceeds from this event will be allocated towards Lua Viet's projects focusing on social, medical and humanitarian efforts in Vietnam.

For Questions or Tickets, please contact:

Kim Lan Le: 408.203.1318

Andrew Nguyen: 408.218.8848

Katie Nguyen: 408.416.7363

Ton Ngo: 408.846.5435

December 18, 2006

6:30pm

Alum Rock Neighborhood Coalition Meeting

277 Mahoney Drive, SJ 95127

ARNC encourages neighbors to get involved at any level to help improve the quality of the Alum Rock community.

Visit the Alum Rock Neighborhood Network for more information on this and other upcoming events

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/alumrockneighborhoodnetwork>

www.arnc.org

January 18, 2006

6-8:30pm

Town Hall Meeting

Location: Tully Library, 880 Tully Road, San Jose

Presented by the Office of Councilmember Madison Nguyen

Topic: Transportation and Traffic Calming

For more information, contact: 408.535.4907 or e-mail district7@sanjoseca.gov

Saturday, January 27, 2007

3 PM - 5 PM

Aid to Children without Parents' Musical Event

Location: Montgomery Theater

271 S. Market St, San Jose

"To Kids From Kids" is an annual musical event where young local performers collaborate to bring hope to the disadvantaged children in Vietnam. The concert includes violinists, piano ensembles, traditional Vietnamese instruments, folkloric dances and songs. This year, all proceeds will go toward building a school in Dong Thap, Vietnam.

Phone: 408.225.0405

Fax: 408.225.8302

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[For more information on please contact:](#)

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